

Sustainable Business Development Via Applying an Online Business Model for Gaining Benefit in Economics, Education, and Social Network



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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Article history

Received 23/6/2022

Revised 17/8/2022

Accepted 5/9/2022

Keywords

The Blogger Village
Entrepreneurship
Sustainable Business
ITCs
Online Business
Small and Medium
Enterprises

Regional development includes infrastructure and information technology. Infrastructure, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is worse in rural areas and small towns in Indonesia. One of such areas is the village of Menowo located in Magelang, Central Java Province, Indonesia. The purpose of this research is to study a contemporary phenomenon of the Blogger Village within its real-life content. In this research, a case study is described: a young man who was born in the village has started an "online business community". Now, people call the Village Menowo "The Blogger Village". Since 2014, more than 50 people in the Blogger Village have got their own revenue accounts for hundreds of thousands of U.S. dollars per month. The Blogger Community has contributed to reducing unemployment in the village. The study has found that the Blogger Community can provide additional income for Magelang SMEs. Magelang SMEs can use the profit margin of their businesses to update hardware and software including Internet information sources from anywhere. The study provides new information related to the regional development, local development, and complement economic empirical studies of a research that has been done before. The applied research is beneficial for the Government of Magelang to determine and develop policies of the regional economic development of Magelang and to establish appropriate programs and activities for developing the economy of the area. The research will also help eliminate the overlap among the existing rules both at central and local levels, as well as among sectors and agencies.

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1. Introduction

The National Industrial Policy, telematics has been recognized as a future mainstay industry. In addition, telematics (ICT) is an appropriate infrastructure that has become an important prerequisite for sustainable economic growth. Managing local development is not a new thing; however, the concept of local development and its implementation techniques continue to evolve. In general, local development is an effort to develop the local economy. The accumulation of these activities is expected to have a considerable impact on the competitiveness and development of the national economy.

Government areas that have been dependent on funding from the central government should be ready to develop the financial strategy according to the regional and local budgets. Financial area includes the policy of budgeting, revenues, and expenditures, while local budgets are plans of local governments in the monetary form (rupiah) within a certain period (one year) (Nogi, 2005). The regional budget is used as a tool to determine the amount of revenues and expenses, help decision-making and development planning, authorize future expenditures, motivate employees, and as a coordination tool for all the activities of different units. In relation to financial management of the local government, the regional budget should be based on public interest (public-oriented). This review is not only seen on the amount of the budget allocation for public purposes but can also be seen on the amount of community participation in planning, implementation, and oversight of local finances.

ICT is the foundation of the economy and a driving force of social changes in the 21st century (Celebic and Rendulic, 2011). ICTs create new services and business practices across many sectors of the economy. Transportation, professional services, electronics manufacturing, and broadcasting are examples of sectors that have been transformed by information and communication technologies (Ramirez, 2001).

In Indonesia, the penetration of Internet users was 24.23% or 63 million people of the total population (260 million people) in 2012. In 2014, Internet users amounted to 82 million people, and Indonesia ranked the 8th position of Internet users around the world (Kemenkominfo, 2016). Of total Internet users, youth communities were the main users. They ranged from 58.4% of those who were 12 – 35 years old and 14.4% of those who were 25 – 29 years old [3] or 80% of those who were 15 – 19 years old in 2014. ICTs dispersion is only concentrated in big cities on Java Island like Jakarta (3.5 million people), Surabaya (955 thousand people), and Bekasi (676 thousand people). The use of the Internet in Indonesia is mainly aimed at Internet business and local needs of society (Fizzanty et al, 2011).

In comparison with the developed countries of Asia (Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia), Internet connection speed in Indonesia is lower. ICTs infrastructures have not yet been developed optimally by the Government of Indonesia. Besides, big Internet users are factors that lower the Internet speed in Indonesia. In Indonesia, ICTs facilities and infrastructure in rural areas are very limited. To overcome these problems, the Indonesian Ministry of Communication and Information (Kemenkominfo) has issued programs for increasing the speed and Internet access in both urban and rural areas.

Indonesian Economic Census data show that the majority of SMEs don't use computers and the Internet in running their businesses: it's only 6.22% (computer use) and 9.76% (Internet use), especially in rural areas. Therefore, since 2008, Kemenkominfo has issued "Universal Service Obligation (USO) 1" to fulfill Internet needs around the rural and remote areas in Indonesia. USO is categorized into Kampung Berdering (Ringing Village), Kampung Pinter (Internet Village), Internet Service Center at District (PLIK), and Mobile of PLIK (M-PLIK). In 2011, 100 units of 131 targeted units of Kampung Pinter, 5,330 units of 5,748 targeted units of PLIK, and 846 units of 1,907 targeted units of M-PLIK (Dirjen PPI, 2011) were available.

Increased local independence is closely associated with the region's ability to Original Local Government Revenue (Pendapatan Asli Daerah) and sustainable business development as well as Original Local Government Revenue (Pendapatan Asli Daerah) is receipts from the sources in the area around a particular place, which are collected under the applicable law. The higher the regional ability to generate revenue, the greater the discretion to use the Original Local Government Revenue area in accordance with the aspirations, needs,

and sustainable priorities of regional development. The increase in revenue is not only a concern of the executive power; the legislature is concerned, too because the size of the Original Local Government Revenue will affect the salary structure of the board members (Adisasmita, 2008).

Economic development of the area is defined as the process where local governments and communities manage existing resources by forming a partnership between local governments and the private sector to create new jobs and stimulate the development of economic activity (growth) that occurs in a favorable area, district, or city (Arsyad, 1999). Each region has its economic development efforts, and the main objective is to increase the number and types of employment opportunities for the community. In an effort to achieve that goal, local governments and communities should jointly take the initiative of regional development. The construction area is always based on optimizing the use of regional resources. The potential available in the region allows it to give priority to alternative development and optimization of the resource management in the area.

2. Literature Review

ICT encompasses all the technology that can be used to collect, process, protect, and store information. It refers to hardware, software (computer programs), and computer networks. There are two types of potential economic gains from the use of IT. Firstly, it increases efficiency, time, and consumption. The second type of the potential benefit comes from the reductions in economic inequality, to the extent that such reductions have a social goal. IT can increase the efficiency of education for the broader population. This investment in people (human capital acquisition) is also likely to lead to a higher growth. IT may also have a positive impact on the innovation process.

ICTs have become an indispensable tool to fight against poverty and provide developing nations with an unprecedented opportunity to meet vital development goals such as poverty reduction, basic health care, and education far more effectively than ever before (UNDP, 2001). The use of ICTs in a village could be very beneficial as most of the poor live in the rural areas. The Blogger Village is a new trade concept in Indonesia. This concept can be seen in electronic bulletin boards or some news in Indonesian. This will have an impact on the community. Related to business in rural areas, Tambunan (2012) study shows that new information technologies have opened many new opportunities for small business in rural communities as well as exposed them to additional risks.

In the Blogger Village, telecommunication technologies have a considerable potential for encouraging the development in rural communities by helping them access the information highway and overcome the barrier of their geographic location. Generally, in rural and small-town areas, various demographic and socio-economic factors such as income levels, cultural attitudes, and geographic and social fragmentation may not be present in configurations that would easily enable the diffusion of commercial access to various IT-enabled services. In the case of North India, two commercial organizations which are subsidiaries of more traditional non-profit NGOs have approached these challenges (Tarahaat and Drishtee, 2001). Both experiments suggest that some economic and social changes can be reached through entrepreneurial innovation. In Indonesia, major problems of ICT development in rural areas are a) difficulties to access public infrastructure (electricity, telecommunication, and its devices), b) the lack of skilled people and resources, c) the lack of ICT materials, and d) minimal support and no incentives of the government (Tambunan, 2012).

The implementation of Internet-based technology has become a very important trend in this globalization era. The Internet plays an important role in business between regions, and most changes in our lives are possible without the Internet (Berry, 2014). In developing the competitiveness, Indonesia can improve the Internet in its business, occupy a unique position in the global digital economy, and estimate its readiness to support these innovations. One of such innovations is an online business. This is a general concept that contains all information about the business that is conveyed using information technology, communication, and an online business concept (Berry, 2014).

Online business (e-business) is any kind of business activity that happens online (through the Internet) and its potention to make a business gain sustainable concept. A business owner who does any or all of their business using the Internet, is running an online business. Running an online business can include buying and selling online and providing an online service. These activities can take many forms: websites, online shops or marketplaces, blogs, and social media accounts. Benefits of doing business online may include a) cost savings in the rent and staff, b) greater flexibility and efficiency in product and service delivery, c) vast accessibility to customers all over the world. E-business is the use of information and communication technology to improve and change main business processes. This business has a positive impact on three participants. 1) Producers can reach consumers widely, collect information about consumer behavior accurately, make decisions about a target market effectively, and serve consumers well. 2) Intermediaries can get income and benefit from economic transactions. 3) Customers can compare and choose various products easily and accurately (Yuka & Andjar, 2016).

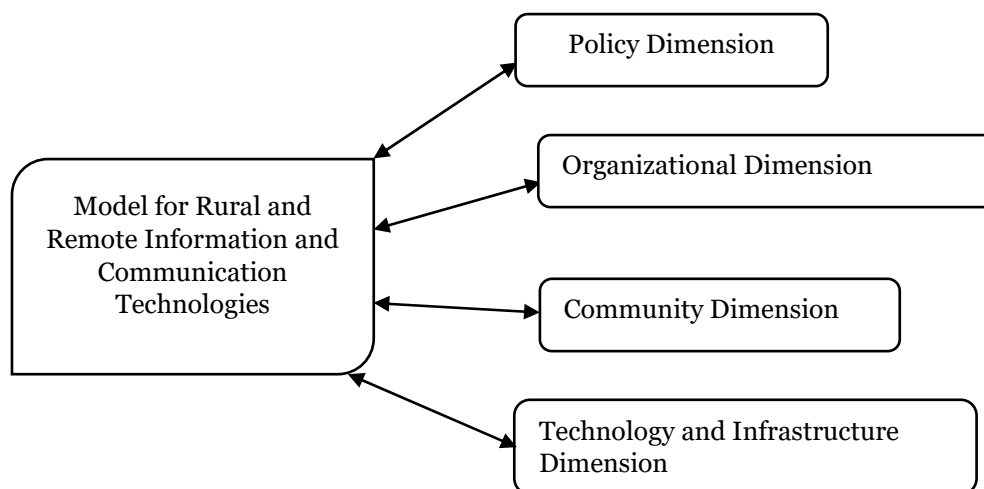


Figure 1. Elementary Model for Rural and Remote Information and Communication Technologies

- a. **Policy Dimension**
Policy dimension of the model focuses on determining the policies and regulations that are available, their scope and orientation, and the process by which they undergo the adaptation or adjustment. The first element addresses the policy incentive programs – “building blocks” to stimulate electronic network organizations on the local (community) level. The second element addresses the impact and influence of the local organizations’ experience on the evolution of the policy incentive programs. These two elements are complementary: the first one addresses the impact of policies on the field of study, and the second one addresses the reaction of the field of study to the policy making process (Maulid et al, 2021).
- b. **Organizational Dimension**
Organizational dimension is analyzed through four complementary elements that address major treasures of the community’s “electronic networking organizations”: 1) the internal coherence of the community’s electronic network organizations; 2) the extent to which this group can be described as a learning organization; 3) how these organizations learn to adapt and change, with the particular attention to personal attributes of their managers (or leaders) and how they seek to transfer their experience; and d) the range of services they offer.
- c. **Community Dimension**
This dimension is addressed through two elements: 1) examples of new “spaces and places for innovation”, ranging from the community electronic networking organizations to electronic bulletin boards which they have created for their users; 2) sector-and-project-specific initiatives pursued by the communities.

d. Technology and Infrastructure Dimension

Technology and infrastructure dimension is more contextual than analytical. This dimension consists of three infrastructure elements: 1) bandwidth, 2) application, and 3) hardware.

3. Research Method

This research is not concentrated on generalizing but has an applied character. A case study is used in this research. A case study is an empirical inquiry that studies a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life content, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and content are not clearly evident (Yin, 2003). This research will describe in detail how the Blogger Village can enhance the local economy.

This research uses a framework developed by Ramirez (2001) to analyze ICTs in rural and remote areas. The model addresses the interrelationship of four major dimensions: policy and regulation, organizational development, community, and infrastructure. We have a data that were obtained from in-depth interviews with Samodo Malik who had started a “Business Online Community”, and then we analyzed it. The data were obtained from field observations and interviews with the respondents like the founder and chief of the Blogger Village and local agencies in the Municipality of Magelang. These agencies are the Agency of Transportation, Communication, and Informatics in the Municipality of Magelang, the Agency for Planning and Development, and Agency for Research, Development, and Statistics. This research was done in three subsequent months, February – March – April 2015. During the first month, the researchers briefly compiled secondary data. During the second month, they visited the “Blogger Village” to interview the respondents and observe the field of study. During the last month, the researchers analyzed field data and compiled them with the literature review.

The concentration of similar businesses in villages (Ind. Kampung) is typical only for some Asian countries. They are related to business communities and provide support for their members and potential newcomers. This approach is very much different from the approach in most European countries. There, the diversification and training or financial support are rather perceived as a matter of public policy.

4. Results and Discussion

Kampung Blogger or the Blogger Village is located on the path of Serayu Raya No. 421 Dukuh Menowo, Kedungsari village – Magelang – Central Java Province. The founder of the Blogger Village is Mr. Sembodo Malik who is very experienced as a blogger and Internet user. Before 2008, he had studied in two universities majoring in chemistry, engineering, and science. He had also worked at a private chemical enterprise in Jakarta. Besides working as an employee, Sembodo Malik explored the Internet and tried to assemble a computer by himself. He tested many Internet programs, online business programs in particular. He actively operated an online business and benefited from this new way of doing business. His succession of online business is passed to his friends in Menowo-Magelang. Even his colleagues and lecturers wanted to learn how to do online business from Sembodo. In 2008, he decided to return to Magelang. There, he intensely taught his friends to use the Internet to increase new income sources for themselves.

In 2008, the Blogger Community led by Sembodo Malik established the Blogger Village in Menowo. Its leader is Mr. Wahyu Setyo Utomo. He was born and lives in Magelang. Now, around 60 people in the surroundings of Magelang are permanent members of this community and 4,288 people are channeled via social media (particularly Facebook) around Indonesia. Commonly, they are not only (unemployed) young people but also come from many different backgrounds. They are teachers, lecturers, nurses, soldiers, bankers, engineers etc. Some people even wanted to quit their fixed jobs and become a blogger like Sembodo Malik.

a. Benefit of the Blogger Village

Economics

The first benefit of doing online business is a bigger income of online entrepreneurs. For example, if 50 – 60 locals own a potential product and go online, they can earn hundreds to thousands U.S. dollars per month. Beginners can obtain approximately \$200 – 500 per month. Experts can earn around \$500 – 3900 per month. Some people can even earn more than \$20,000 per month. Their monthly income fluctuates depending on market conditions and time they dedicate to their business. Such a business model is favored by local young people who want to get “much money”. This idea can change their behavior. They won’t sing with the guitar or just sit doing nothing (nongkrong) anymore. This business doesn’t need considerable tangible resources like a big office, so everyone can do it. This business can even create new job fields in ICT sectors by either establishing an ICT-driven corporation or initiating an online shop individually. This business prevents the urbanization of big cities like Semarang, Jakarta, Surabaya, and Yogyakarta. There are young people who are ready for doing online business.

Education.

The Blogger Community briefly educates newcomers who have a potential product associated with access to the Internet (soft skills) and a computer/laptop (hard skills). The Blogger Community provides the essentials of learning business using Internet tools. Everyone who learns online business will be given the following lessons:

- 1) an introduction of the basic online business model,
- 2) a further review of the online business model,
- 3) a review on how to create and operate “online shops”,
- 4) an understanding of AdSense, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp Business, Amazon, ClickBank, and CPA.

Such short courses and their teachers are provided for free by the community. The students just bring their laptops and Internet devices to learn this business. They also learn entrepreneurship and English. Entrepreneurship is necessary to be learned in the online business model for everyone. Without entrepreneurship, it is almost impossible to start and continue a business successfully, not only an online business, but other business types, too. English training is also provided for those who want to learn online business deeply, but they have limited English language skills. English is essential because this business method needs intensive communications with people from abroad.

Social Networks.

SMEs can invite people from outside to the Blogger Village to study online business. Potential cities are Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Semarang, Surabaya, the cities outside Java Island, and small towns like Ponorogo, Magelang etc. Directly or indirectly, this process gives an increase of new social networks: people make new friends of various backgrounds, find new business partners, and even more. In this case study, the Blogger Village was built in Magelang and since then, 4,288 members have joined Blogger Village’s group on social media. Even many skilled people in the ICT and/or online business fields also share their insights and experience with the Blogger Community and other learners at Menowo. Now, everyone who has ever studied in Menowo doesn’t hesitate to share their experience in this community, and this is not limited to the Internet only.

b. The Blogger Village Influence

Technology.

Computers or laptops which are commonly used are middle class PCs. The Blogger Community primarily uses AdSense as a main application to get benefits of online business. AdSense is a free, simple way for website publishers of all sizes to earn money by displaying targeted Google ads on their websites. This innovative Google business solution will help unleash the true revenue potential of a site.

Using the Internet and devices depends on ICTs built by Internet service providers (ISPs) such as Telkomspeedy, Telkomsel, Indosat Ooredoo, XL, and Tri. The Internet speed is influenced by the age of hardware used by online business players. The newer hardware they have, the faster speed they get. Members of SMEs in the Blogger Village can use laptops or computers produced 3 or more years ago. Even though the progress of the Internet is absolutely dynamic, few of the locals update their hardware or software. Consequently, they cannot browse updated information quickly and to the full extent.

Organization.

Structurally, the Blogger Village needs a simple organizational structure: a leader, a vice-leader, a secretary, a treasurer, and working staff. The community needs a legal organization structure registered in the local government of Magelang. However, the coordination among the staff and members of the community is the main problem.

In 2016 – 2017, the Blogger Village was widely exposed in the national mass media (television and newspapers). The Village was overflowed by newcomers from the city and outside it what became a case study. The challenge is the limited time of SMEs Blogger Community's members as they have other work and matters besides doing online business.

Learning organization occurs when members of the Blogger Community update their e-information from various sources and qualified people of the ICT fields. The project is successful due to people like Sambodo Malik. He visits many conferences, workshops, and informal meetings as a speaker or participant. His experience is used to develop new internet businesses in Magelang. There is no particular secret in the ICT world, everyone can access and learn more about it. Mr. Sambodo says that for doing online business in social networks and outside, there should be quick access to new information considering minimal Internet facilities in the city which became a case study. People who are skilled in ICT should be optimally used to enhance the possibilities of both online business (software) and a computer (hardware) (Sushanti, et al, 2020).

Community.

The Blogger Community provides many places to learn Internet business. People can learn about blogging and practice with the guidance from experts in certain fields. They can study at the primary building of the Blogger Village in Menowo (capacity around 10 – 20 people) and at the secondary building in Kramat Village (Residence of Depkes) located not far from Menowo (capacity over 50 people). Food and drinks, learning materials on Internet business, electricity, and instructors are fully provided by the Menowo Blogger Community. This community gives the new learners a large space to enhance their skills and knowledge about ICT, especially online (Internet) business from other updated sources. They can interact among themselves and with their instructors.

Every blogger member should introduce an online business model to the new members for free. Then everyone who has got new insights should share their knowledge with the newcomers. This learning process will be repeated from the first learning time onwards. The municipality in the case study should “give freedom” to the Blogger Community for different activities. The emergence of the Blogger Village cannot be separated from access to the Internet provided by ISPs corporations like Telkomspeedy, Telkomsel, Indosat, XL, and Tri.

The policy for developing access to the Internet is not only initiated by the Municipality but also strongly supported by the central government through the Ministry of Communication and Information. In its turn, this development directly influences the dynamics of the Blogger Village: the use of Internet devices, the type of Internet business, the ability to learn new things, and the plan for developing new businesses.

c. Interrelationship Among the Main Elements

This community project will build and operate a “legal school for online business” for the beginners, and there is a particular fee for everyone who wants to learn this business. The fee is not big, it is only aimed at stimulating learners to be diligent students.

Members of the community can organize their schedule considering teaching and private time. The community will get other funding sources from donors like governments, big private companies, or Internet clientele. The community can use the profit margin of their business to update hardware and software including Internet information sources. In this case, the learning process in the organization will be dispersed from the experts in certain fields. Each member of the Blogger Community can share updated ICTs information with other members or the beginners (Lokantara, et al, 2022).

The Government of Indonesia doesn't have a specific policy to regulate e-commerce and to filter online content. It should motivate ICT enterprises to be more innovative. As described by Ramirez, the development of ICTs in rural and remote areas is influenced by four factors: technology, organization, community, and policy (Rosyidah, 2022). Related to this study, these factors also influence how the Blogger Village emerges and goes forward. Speaking of planning and initiatives, the community is motivated by the life philosophy of Sembodo Malik. He likes to interact with his peers and wants everyone to enjoy their life. Sembodo's philosophy is translated as "free services" for everyone who wants to study online business in Menowo. Sembodo often teaches new e-business skills to communities before they teach new learners.

The municipality of Magelang (Bappeda) invited the Blogger Community to be the speakers at the training "Online Marketing for Blogger Village in Magelang" in 2014. But it was only a forum that didn't have any impacts on the development of the Blogger Village itself. The Blogger Community was offered a project worth USD \$30,000 from the Indonesian Ministry of Farming to support funding of the community. But this project was related to husbandry, not to online business. Because of land scarcity in the periphery area of Magelang, the local government did not approve this project.

Internet capacity of ISPs in Magelang has increased from 5 Mbps in 2010 to 20 Mbps in 2020. As a founder, Sembodo Malik is a key figure to build and develop the Blogger Village. Both knowledge of the Internet and funding are supported by him to improve the Village. He has established the societal information community (KIM) of Parasamya. This is an Internet marketing organization which wasn't officially registered by the government. However, this organization has recruited 15 local people to work at KIM.

5. Conclusion

Online businesses have to operate within an uncertain and multifaceted legal system, compete with highly capable rivals, keep up with rapidly changing technologies, and respond to emerging social and cultural demands. The community mentioned in the article will build and operate a legal school for the online business beginners. It will get money from donors like governments, big private companies, or Internet clients. Profit margin will be used to update hardware and software. New knowledge and skills will be dispersed from Sembodo Malik to the newcomers. Each member of the Blogger Community will share updated ICTs information with other members or beginners.

The Government of Indonesia should motivate ICT enterprises to be more innovative. Now, Bappeda at the Municipality of Magelang is initiating a smart city program in this area. This is a program to support the ICTs community. Improved regulation and licensing are necessary cofactors to accelerate the blogger village concept. The regulatory overhaul is needed at the national and regional levels. The study results are useful for the Government of Magelang to formulate and determine policies of the regional economic development of the area. They will help establish appropriate programs and activities for developing the economy of Magelang. This research will also help eliminate the overlap among the existing rules at central and local levels, and among different sectors and agencies.

Acknowledgment

The researchers are grateful to Mr. Andjar Prasetyo and Mr. Anugerah Yuka who shared information about Blogger Village, as well as to Mr. S. Malik and Mr. W.S. Utomo who significantly contributed to this study.

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